The Catholic High School Chester

Lettings Policy

Approved By	Full Governing Board
Category	Finance
Policy Owner	Andrew Kilcoyne
Date Approved	14/7/26
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1. Statement of Intent

1.1 The Catholic High School, Chester recognises the value of making its facilities available for educational, sporting, recreational, cultural and community activities outside the normal school day.

1.2 The school welcomes appropriate community use of its premises where this supports the school's values, benefits the local community and generates income to support the maintenance, improvement and sustainability of the school's facilities.

1.3 This policy sets out the principles, responsibilities and procedures for the hire of the school's premises, ensuring that lettings are managed safely, consistently and in accordance with relevant legislation, safeguarding requirements and the school's operational needs.

1.4 The school reserves the right to refuse any letting where it considers the proposed use to be inappropriate, incompatible with the school's ethos, or where it may present an unacceptable risk to people, property or the reputation of the school.

2. Legal Framework

2.1 This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to:

- The School Premises (England) Regulations 2012
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Occupiers' Liability Act 1957
- The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013

2.2 This policy also takes account of relevant guidance, including:

- DfE – *Advice on Standards for School Premises*
- DfE – *After-school Clubs, Community Activities and Tuition: Safeguarding Guidance for Providers*
- DfE – *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (current version)

2.3 This policy should be read alongside the school's:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Fire Safety Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Premises Management Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Board of Trustees (or its delegated committee) is responsible for:

- approving and reviewing this policy;
- ensuring that community use of the school's premises supports the school's strategic aims and values;
- approving the scale of charges for lettings;
- ensuring appropriate governance and oversight of the school's lettings arrangements.

3.2 The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the management of school lettings and may delegate day-to-day administration to the School Business Manager or other nominated member of staff.

3.3 The Headteacher is responsible for:

- approving or declining applications for the hire of the school's premises;
- ensuring the school complies with relevant legislation, licence conditions and health and safety requirements;
- ensuring appropriate insurance arrangements are maintained by the school;
- determining the information and documentation required from hirers according to the nature and risk of the proposed letting;
- ensuring appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place where required;
- ensuring suitable risk assessments are completed where appropriate.

3.4 The School Business Manager (or delegated Lettings Officer) is responsible for the day-to-day administration of lettings, including:

- processing applications and bookings;
- ensuring facilities are available and fit for use;
- issuing Conditions of Hire and associated documentation;
- confirming any documentation required from the hirer;

- liaising with the Premises Manager regarding access, security and operational arrangements.

3.5 The Premises Manager is responsible for:

- preparing the premises for use;
- ensuring facilities and equipment are safe and serviceable;
- reporting defects or safety concerns;
- securing the premises following use where required.

3.6 All hirers are responsible for:

- complying with the Conditions of Hire;
- ensuring the activity is conducted safely and appropriately;
- supervising all participants and spectators attending the activity;
- leaving the premises clean, secure and in good condition;
- reporting any accidents, incidents, defects or damage immediately.

3.7 Where required by the school, hirers must also provide evidence of appropriate insurance, safeguarding arrangements or risk assessments before the letting is approved.

3.8 The level of documentation required will depend upon the category of hirer and the nature of the activity, as set out in this policy.

4. Objectives

4.1 The school makes its facilities available for hire where this is compatible with its educational purpose, values and operational requirements.

4.2 The objectives of the school's lettings programme are to:

- support educational, sporting, recreational, cultural and community activities;
- encourage responsible use of the school's facilities for the benefit of the local community;
- generate income to contribute towards the maintenance, improvement and sustainability of the school's facilities;

- maximise appropriate use of the school's premises outside the normal school day.

4.3 The education, welfare and safety of pupils will always take priority over community lettings.

4.4 The school reserves the right to refuse or cancel any letting where:

- the proposed activity is inconsistent with the school's ethos or values;
- the letting would interfere with the school's educational activities or operational requirements;
- suitable staffing or facilities are unavailable;
- health, safety or safeguarding requirements cannot be met.

4.5 The school will not approve any letting that it considers may bring the school into disrepute or otherwise be detrimental to its pupils, staff or wider community.

5. Categories of Hirer

5.1 To ensure that applications are assessed fairly, consistently and proportionately, the school categorises hirers according to the nature of the organisation and the activity being undertaken. This enables the school to determine the level of documentation, insurance, safeguarding arrangements and other information that may be required before approving a letting.

5.2 The categories and examples below are intended as guidance and are not exhaustive. The school recognises that not every booking will fit neatly within a single category and reserves the right to determine the most appropriate category for any hirer, and any documentation required, based on the nature of the proposed activity and the level of risk involved.

5.3 The Headteacher, or delegated officer, may request additional information or impose additional conditions where this is considered necessary to ensure the safe and appropriate use of the school's premises.

Category	Typical Hirers	Public Liability Insurance	Safeguarding	Risk Assessment
1 – Private Hirers	Birthday parties, family celebrations, informal sport, private meetings	Not normally required	Not normally required	Not normally required
2 – Community Organisations	Churches, choirs, charities, community groups	May be required depending on the activity	Where applicable	Where required by the school
3 – Organised Clubs and Associations	FA football clubs, Uniformed organisations, Dance schools, martial arts clubs	Normally required	Required where children or vulnerable adults are involved	Where required by the school
4 – Commercial Providers	Tuition companies, coaching businesses, holiday clubs, fitness providers	Required	Required where children or vulnerable adults are involved	Where required by the school

6. Applications

6.1 Applications to hire the school's premises should normally be made through the school's approved online lettings system, accessible via the school website.

6.2 Where appropriate, applications may be accepted through an alternative process approved by the School Business Manager or Headteacher, for example where payment arrangements or contractual requirements cannot be accommodated through the online system.

6.3 All applications must include sufficient information to enable the school to assess the suitability of the proposed letting. This will normally include:

- the name of the individual or organisation applying;
- the proposed activity;
- the facilities required;
- the proposed dates and times;
- the expected number and age range of attendees;
- details of any specialist equipment to be used.

6.4 The school will determine what additional information is required based on the category of hirer and the nature of the proposed activity. This may include:

- evidence of Public Liability Insurance;
- safeguarding information, including DBS arrangements where appropriate;
- risk assessments;
- first aid arrangements;
- licences or qualifications relevant to the activity.

6.5 The level of information required will be proportionate to the activity and the associated level of risk.

6.6 The Headteacher or delegated officer will consider each application individually and may:

- approve the booking;
- approve the booking subject to conditions; or
- decline the booking.

6.7 Approval of one letting does not guarantee approval of future applications.

6.8 Where a proposed letting involves a significant financial commitment, long-term occupation, exclusive use of facilities or any arrangement requiring legal documentation, the Trust reserves the right to seek legal advice and obtain approval from the appropriate level of governance before the letting is confirmed.

7. Fees

7.1 The school's current scale of charges is published within the school's approved lettings system and is available on request.

7.2 Charges are reviewed periodically by the school and may be amended to reflect changes in operating costs and market conditions.

7.3 Bookings made through the school's online lettings system will normally be paid by debit or credit card in accordance with the payment arrangements set out within the booking system.

7.4 Where bookings are made outside of the online lettings system, payment will normally be made by bank transfer or another method agreed by the School Business Manager. The applicable charges will be the same regardless of the payment method.

Cancellations and Refunds

7.5 Where the school cancels a booking, the hirer will receive a full refund of any fees paid, unless an alternative booking is agreed.

7.6 Where a hirer cancels a booking at least six hours before the agreed start time, a full refund will normally be provided.

7.7 Cancellations made less than six hours before the booking will not normally be eligible for a refund, unless the school agrees that exceptional circumstances apply.

Outstanding Payments

7.8 The school reserves the right to refuse access to the premises where fees remain outstanding or where payment has not been made in accordance with the agreed terms.

Damage and Additional Costs

7.9 The hirer is responsible for any loss of, or damage to, the school's buildings, facilities, equipment or furnishings arising from the letting, beyond reasonable wear and tear.

7.10 Where damage, loss, theft or additional cleaning results from the letting, the school reserves the right to recover the reasonable costs of repair, replacement or reinstatement from the hirer.

8. Insurance and Liability

8.1 The school maintains appropriate insurance arrangements for its premises and activities.

8.2 Hirers are responsible for ensuring that they hold any insurance required by the school for their activity.

8.3 The requirement to provide Public Liability Insurance will depend upon the category of hirer, the nature of the activity and the associated level of risk.

8.4 Participation in sporting and recreational activities involves an inherent risk of injury. Hirers are responsible for organising and supervising activities safely and for ensuring participants are fit to take part where appropriate.

8.5 The school reserves the right to request evidence of insurance at any time before or during the period of hire.

8.6 Nothing in this policy excludes or limits any liability that cannot lawfully be excluded.

9. Data Protection

9.1 Personal information collected as part of the lettings process will be processed in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection legislation and will only be used for the administration of school lettings.

10. Health and Safety

10.1 The school is committed to providing premises that are safe and suitable for the activities approved under this policy.

10.2 Prior to the letting, the school will ensure that:

- the premises are fit for use;
- emergency exits are clearly identified and unobstructed;
- fire safety equipment is available;
- relevant emergency information is made available to the hirer.

10.3 The hirer is responsible for the safe management of the activity taking place during the period of hire and must:

- ensure that participants are appropriately supervised;
- comply with all health and safety instructions issued by the school;
- keep fire exits, escape routes and fire doors clear at all times;
- ensure that the maximum occupancy of the hired area is not exceeded;
- report any accident, defect or safety concern immediately;
- leave the premises in a safe and secure condition.

10.4 Where appropriate to the nature of the activity, the hirer must provide suitable first aid arrangements and ensure appropriately trained persons are available.

10.5 Where required by the school, the hirer must provide a suitable risk assessment. The requirement for a risk assessment will be determined according to the category of hirer, the nature of the activity and the level of risk involved.

10.6 Where a letting involves children, young people or vulnerable adults, the hirer must ensure that appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place in accordance with this policy.

10.7 The school's fire evacuation procedures and assembly point will be communicated to the hirer before the letting commences. Hirers are responsible for ensuring that all participants are made aware of the emergency procedures applicable to their activity.

10.8 Hirers must immediately cease any activity where they believe conditions have become unsafe and report the matter to the school.

11. Safeguarding

11.1 The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all hirers to share this commitment where their activities involve children or young people.

11.2 The safeguarding requirements placed upon a hirer will depend on the category of hirer and the nature of the activity being undertaken.

Activities involving children or young people

11.3 Where a letting involves the provision of activities for children or young people by an external organisation or provider, the school may require evidence of:

- an appropriate Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- a named safeguarding lead;
- appropriate DBS checks where required by law;
- suitable supervision arrangements;
- any other safeguarding information considered necessary by the school.

11.4 Private family events, such as birthday parties, will not normally be required to provide safeguarding documentation. Responsibility for supervising children attending such events rests with the hirer.

Approval of Lettings

11.5 Before approving a letting, the school will consider:

- the nature of the proposed activity;
- the category of hirer;
- health and safety implications;
- safeguarding considerations;
- the suitability of the premises;
- compatibility with the school's ethos and values;
- any operational impact on the school.

11.6 The school reserves the right to refuse any booking where safeguarding, health and safety or operational concerns cannot be satisfactorily addressed.

Prevent Duty

11.7 The school will not approve any letting that:

- promotes extremist or unlawful views;
- encourages hatred, discrimination or violence;
- is incompatible with the school's values or statutory duties, including the Prevent Duty;

- is likely to bring the school into disrepute.

11.8 Any concerns arising during a letting will be investigated and may result in the immediate termination of the booking. Where appropriate, concerns will be referred to the relevant authorities.

12. Using the site

12.1 The school will ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to provide access to the premises for approved lettings.

12.2 Hirers must:

- only use the areas included within their booking;
- comply with any instructions issued by school staff;
- ensure the premises are left clean, tidy and secure;
- respect neighbouring properties and minimise unnecessary noise;
- report any accident, defect, damage or security concern immediately.
- comply with any reasonable instruction issued by school staff in relation to health and safety, security or safeguarding.

12.3 Keys, access fobs, alarm codes or security codes will not normally be issued to hirers without the prior written approval of the Headteacher or delegated officer.

12.4 The use of smoke machines, pyrotechnics or any hazardous substances is prohibited unless specifically authorised by the school.

12.5 The school's car park may be used by hirers where authorised. Vehicles are parked entirely at the owner's risk and the school accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to vehicles or their contents.

12.6 Where concerns arise regarding the conduct of a hirer or persons attending a letting, the school reserves the right to:

- issue a warning;
- impose additional conditions on future bookings;
- suspend or terminate the current letting;

- refuse future bookings.

12.7 The action taken will be proportionate to the seriousness and frequency of the breach.

12.8 Any safeguarding concern or allegation arising during a letting will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and, where appropriate, referred to the relevant statutory agencies.

13. Equipment

13.1 Hirers must request the use of any school equipment or facilities as part of the booking process. The school reserves the right to refuse the use of equipment where it considers this necessary for operational, health and safety or maintenance reasons.

13.2 School furniture, fittings and equipment must not be moved, altered or removed without the prior permission of the school.

13.3 Hirers bringing their own equipment onto the premises must ensure that it is safe, fit for purpose, appropriately maintained and suitable for the intended activity. The school reserves the right to prohibit the use of any equipment considered unsafe or inappropriate.

13.4 The hirer is responsible for any loss of, or damage to, the school's buildings, facilities, furniture or equipment arising from the letting, beyond reasonable wear and tear. The school reserves the right to recover the reasonable costs of repair or replacement.

13.5 Where agreed in advance, the school may permit long-term hirers to store equipment on the premises. Any equipment stored remains entirely at the owner's risk and the school accepts no responsibility for loss, theft or damage.

13.6 Hirers are responsible for obtaining any licences, permissions or consents required for their activities, including (where applicable) licences relating to regulated entertainment, music, alcohol or other licensable activities.

13.7 Animals are not permitted on the school site unless prior permission has been granted by the school or the animal is an assistance dog.

14. Monitoring and Review

14.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the trustees and local board of governors.